

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Governor Chet Culver ★ Lt. Governor Patty Judge

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GOVERNOR CULVER ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR QUALITY CARE

Seven nursing homes across the state recognized

DES MOINES – Governor Chet Culver today announced that seven Iowa nursing homes have been selected to receive a 2008 Governor's Award for Quality Care in Health Care Facilities.

"Iowa's seniors deserve the best in long-term care," said Governor Culver. That is why I am proud to recognize these seven long-term care providers, who represent some of the best in the state. Each facility is to be congratulated for its selection, and I thank them for their commitment to outstanding care and quality service for their patients and loved ones."

Selected to receive a 2008 Governor's Award are Sunnycrest Manor in Dubuque, Oelwein Health Care Center in Oelwein, Burling House in Charles City, Arbor Springs in West Des Moines, Happy Siesta Health Care Center in Remsen, Community Memorial Health Center in Hartley, and Heritage Nursing Home in Bancroft.

The Quality Care Award was established to recognize those long-term care providers that demonstrate the provision of the highest quality of care to their residents. Since the first awards were presented in 2001, a total of 38 facilities have received a Governor's Award. One of this year's award-winning facilities, Oelwein Health Care Center, had previously received a Governor's Award for Quality Care in 2002. Additionally, Burling House in Charles City is the first small group home for the developmentally disabled to be honored with a Governor's Award. Licensed as an intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded (ICF/MR), Burling House provides care to no more than 12 residents.

Sunnycrest Manor is a 121-bed nursing facility, which also operates a residential care facility and ICF/MR facility in Dubuque. The virtues of the Sunnycrest Manor staff were highlighted in the facility's nomination application. "They have a great staff of loving, caring individuals who complement each other well," the nominator wrote. Also cited

was the facility's activities department, which does a very good job of "getting everyone involved." Among the most unique aspects of the facility's activities was its "Heart's Desire" program, which seeks to make the residents' greatest wishes come true.

The Oelwein Health Care Center, a 61-bed skilled nursing facility, was cited for its continual implementation of "new ways for giving quality care to their residents." The nominator wrote of the facility's consistent staffing policies where staff is assigned to the same resident or wing at all times. Consistent staffing permits residents to feel a sense of closeness to and trust with the staff. The facility's culture change steering committee, neighborhood activity program, and well-organized volunteer program were also highlighted in the nomination.

Burling House of Charles City is the first residential group home to receive a Governor's Award for Quality Care. In describing the program, the nominator wrote that Burling House "exemplifies the goals [of the Governor's Award]. The most important thing Burling House provides is the most proficient and caring staff who are willing to go beyond what they are expected to do." Specifically addressed by the nominator was Burling House's willingness to go the extra mile, whether providing residents with a relaxed and home-like environment or caring for a terminally-ill client.

Outstanding and caring staff was the chief factor in the nomination of Arbor Springs, a 56-bed free-standing nursing facility in West Des Moines. "The staff has a genuine interest in each resident and seems to be on the cutting edge regarding new methods of treatment for memory loss," the nominator wrote, adding: "My wife has been a resident at Arbor Springs for more than three years. I believe her life has been extended because of the excellent care that she has received."

Highlighted in its nomination form were the many unique services provided for the residents of Happy Siesta Health Care Center, a 78-bed nursing facility in Remsen. "Now that my husband has been a resident ... we have witnessed first-hand the exceptional care and concern displayed by the staff. They are interested in our feelings, friendly, and very empathetic to all residents and their families," the nominator wrote. Also cited were the facility's various resident activities; specifically its "wish trips" and the monthly "diner's club".

Personal service and attention to detail were two of the main descriptions highlighted in the nomination application for the Community Memorial Health Center, a 65-bed nursing facility in Hartley. "Someone is always asking what they can do for you," a nominator wrote: "I felt very much at home there." A second nomination application for the facility cited the staff's dedication to resident care. "The staff is encouraged to give input in the amount of time it takes to care for each resident." Other program areas, including activities, dietary, and physical therapy, were all recognized by the nominators for the quality of service provided to the residents.

The final facility selected to receive a 2008 Governor's Award for Quality Care was Heritage Nursing Home, a 30-bed nursing facility in Bancroft. "Heritage Nursing Home

... truly exemplifies all of the qualities needed to be awarded the Governor's Award," the nominator wrote. "When our mother was a resident, we learned that moving into such a facility does not have to be depressing and heartbreaking but, rather, an almost comforting experience for both the resident and the entire family." Beyond the exceptional nursing care, the nominator stressed the many uplifting activities and special events held for the residents, including traditional German and Scandinavian baked goods, armchair travel sessions, interaction with local school children, and a community Fourth of July celebration.

This year's Governor's Award recipients were selected from a field of 19 nominated facilities. Each nominated facility was evaluated and scored according to predetermined criteria, including the uniqueness of programs and services, replicability of programs and services, resources required to provide quality care or services, the resident's quality of life, and the facility's history of compliance. Staff from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals' (DIA) Health Facilities Division conducted onsite visits to verify each of the finalist's eligibility for the Governor's Award.

"Thousands of Iowans receive compassionate care in our state's long-term care facilities. Too often, however, these facilities, their staff, and the quality service they provide go unnoticed by the general public," Governor Culver explained. "One of the best ways to promote quality care is to recognize and encourage it. This year's honorees all provide a level of care and service to their residents worthy of this recognition."

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